Editor
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Dear Editor,

Attorney General Meese's explanation of the FBI's ~~not~~ failure to immediately conduct an investigation of the Reagan administration's effort to bribe the Iranian government with arms and of its illegal, clandestine transfer of the incredible profits from these deals to the Nicaraguan Contras is that he and the FBI director (who is a former federal judge) conferred and decided that it is improper for the FBI to conduct other than criminal investigations, or investigations of specific federal crimes. Mr. Meese's representation is not true. The FBI has, among other well-known authorities, the right and obligation to conduct special investigations for the man who, if we are to believe him, wants most of all to get and give the people all the facts, Ronald Reagan. My authority is the late J. Edgar Hoover. What follows is his testimony before the Warren Commission, Volume 5, page 98. The questioner, Mr. Rankin, was the Commission's general counsel. He had been solicitor general of the United States:

> **Mr. RANKIN.** You have provided many things to us in assisting the Commission in connection with this investigation and I assume, at least in a general way, you are familiar with the investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy, is that correct?
>
> **Mr. HOOVER.** That is correct. When President Johnson returned to Washington he communicated with me within the first 24 hours, and asked the Bureau to pick up the investigation of the assassination because as you are aware, there is no Federal jurisdiction for such an investigation. (It is not a Federal crime to kill or attack the President or the Vice President or any of the continuity of officers who would succeed to the Presidency) . . .
>
> However, the President has a right to request the Bureau to make special investigations, and in this instance he asked that this investigation be made. I immediately assigned a special force (headed by the special agent in charge at Dallas, Tex.) to initiate the investigation, and to get all details and facts concerning it, which we obtained, and then prepared a report which we submitted to the Attorney General for transmission to the President.
>
> **MR. RANKIN.** From your study of this entire matter of the assassination and work in connection with it, do you know of any credible evidence that has ever come to your attention that there was a conspiracy either foreign or domestic involved in the assassination?

It is hard to believe that both the attorney general and FBI director do not know that the President could have requested this investigation and it is impossible to believe that neither knew how commonplace non-criminal investigations by the FBI are. Its investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy was file classified under "administrative inquiry," for which the FBI's file number is 62. Of the several hundred FBI file classification numbers the very first is certainly without involvement in federal crimes:"1.Training Schools. ..."

And it is during the period in which the FBI failed to investigate and preserve evidence that the White House paper-shredders were used to destroy records required in any investigation.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

Mike- please use quote. you may want to cut Rankin & Hoover's "That is correct." I use it to show I'm not using it out of context.